

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 116230
ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /015 R

66011

DRAFTED BY: ARA: LBLEVINE

APPROVED BY: ARA: LEONARD B. LEVINE

-----035197 062123Z /62

R 060433Z MAY 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 116230

FOL MANAGUA 2057 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO GUATEMALA SAN JOSE
SAN SALVADOR TEGUCIGALPA MAY 4, 1978 REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 2057

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, NU

SUBJECT: EMBASSY-OPPOSITION DIALOG

SUMMARY: AMB AND EMBOFFS HAVE CONTINUED TO SUGGEST TO OPPOSITION
LEADERS THAT INTRANSIGENCE WITH REGARD TO NEGOTIATING POLITICAL CHANGE

IN NICARAGUA IS DANGEROUS. ON THE POSITIVE SIDE WE HAVE
ARGUED THAT THE OPPOSITION SHOULD TRY TO CAPITALIZE ON THE PERVASIVE
ANTI-SOMOZA SENTIMENT BY SEEKING CONCESSIONS WHICH WILL LEAD TO A
PEACEFUL, CONSTITUTIONAL TRANSFER OF POWER. THERE HAS BEEN SOME
LIMITED PROGRESS AS REFLECTED IN THE FOLLOWING CONVERSATION
BETWEEN AMB AND DR. EMILIO ALVAREZ. END SUMMARY.

1. ONE OF THE HARDLINERS ON THE ISSUE OF DIALOG WITH SOMOZA OR THE
LIBERAL PARTY HAS BEEN DR. EMILIO ALVAREZ MONTALVAN, LEADER OF THE
AUTENTICO FACTION OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY. ALVAREZ HAS SIGNIFICANT
INFLUENCE AS AN INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ANALYST WITH ALL CONSERVATIVE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 116230

FACTIONS AND WITH UDEL. ON APRIL 27 ALVAREZ INFORMED THE AMB THAT
THE AUTENTICOS HAD AGREED WITH THE CONSERVATIVE NATIONAL ACTION (ANC),

WHICH IS A MEMBER OF UDEL, TO MAKE JOINT PUBLIC DECLARATIONS IN THE
FUTURE. HOWEVER, HIS PARTY WOULD NOT JOIN UDEL, NOR WOULD THE ANC
LEAVE UDEL. THE AMB ASKED IF ANY OTHER SUCH CONTACTS HAD BEEN MADE
AND WAS TOLD THAT NO AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER CONSERVATIVE FACTIONS HAD

YET BEEN REACHED.

2. THE AMB SAID HE FELT THAT CURRENTLY SUPORT FOR THE REGIME WAS AT ITS LOWEST POSSIBLE LEVEL, BUT THAT THE TRADITIONAL POLITICAL OP-POSITION LACKED EFFECTIVE GRASS ROOTS ORGANIZATION TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPOSITION SENTIMENT. BECAUSE OF THIS, THE LEFTISTS AND THE SANDINISTAS WERE MOBILIZING AND BENEFITING FROM SPONTANEOUS PROTEST SENTIMENT. THE AMB SAID THATHE WAS CONVINCED THAT SOME OPPOSITION LEADERS FAVORED REVOLUTION UNLESS SOMOZA RESIGNS IMMEDIATELY. HE SAID IT APPEARED TO HIM THAT THESE LEADERS WERE HOPING THAT THE COMBINATION OF SANDINISTA-LED CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND DEMONSTRATIONS, AND SANDINISTA ARMED ATTACKS WOULD CULMINATE IN A NEW AND BROADER GENERAL STRIKE, WHICH WOULD INCLUDE THE TRANSPORTATION SECTOR, LEADING TO A COUP. THE AMB TOLD ALVAREZ THAT THIS WAS A RISKY AP-PROACH. A BLOODBATH COULD RESULT, AND ANY FACTION MIGHT TAKE OVER THE GOVERNMENT. THE AMB SAID THAT, BECAUSE THERE IS CURRENTLY SUCH WIDESPREAD OPPOSITION SENTIMENT, IT IS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE LESS-VIOLENT LEADERSHIP, TO TAKE THE LEAD IN SEEKING A POLITICAL SOLUTION.

3. ALVAREZ AGREED THATTHE TRADITIONAL OPPOSITION LACKED EFFECTIVE GRASS ROOTS ORGANIZATION. HE SAID THAT MOST POLITICIANS AND BUSINESS-MEN HAD, AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER, COLLABORATED WITH SOMOZA. HE SAID THAT HE FELT SOMOZA TO BE INSINCERE AND THAT ANYONE WHO INITIATED COMMUNICATION WITH SOMOZA WOULD GET "BURNED". ALVAREZ SAID THAT HE FELT IT WOULD BE "UNPRODUCTIVE" FOR THE OPPOSITION TO MAKE A PACT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 116230

WITH SOMOZA AT THE EXPENSE OF THE PEOPLE WHO WERE FIGHTING HIM IN THE STREETS. THE AMB REPLIED THAT CONVERSATIONS WITH THE GON NEED NOT RESULT IN POSITIONS DETRIMENTAL TO THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE DEMONSTRATING IN THE STREETS. HE STRESSED THAT THE OPPOSITION SHOULD NOT DISMISS AS UNTRUTHFUL SOMOZA'S PROFESSIONS OF HIS DESIRE TO RE-LINQUISH POWER WITH DIGNITY AND HONOR. BY MAKING SERIOUS DEMANDS OF THE GON, HE CONTINUED, DEMANDS DIRECTLY RELATED TO DISMANTLING THE DYNASTIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT IN NICARAGUA, THE OPPOSITIN COULD TEST SOMOZA'S SERIOUSNESS. THE AMB STATED HIS BELIEF THAT SUCH DEMANDS WOULD BE JUDGED ON THEIR OWN MERITS.

4. AS THE CONVERSATIN PROGRESSED, ALVAREZ PROFESSED A MORE FLEXIBLE VIEWPOINT. HE AGREED THAT PERHAPS SOMOZA SHOULD BE GIVEN THE OPPOR-TUNITY TO SAVE FACE AND MAKE A GRACEFUL EXIT FROM POWER. HE REPEATED THAT MOST LEADERS HAD COLLABORATED WITH SOMOZA AND SAID THAT THE USG WAS NOT SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING SOMOZA IN POWER AND THAT THE PCN (CONSERVATIVES) HAD ALSO PLAYED A PART. HE SUGGESTED THE POS-SIBILITY OF A TWO-STEP CONSTITUTIONAL SOLUTION BY WHICH SOMOZA WOULD RULE UNTIL 1980 AND RESIGN EARLY, PERMITTING THE HOLDING OF FREE ELECTIONS UNDER SOME TYPE OF "NATIONAL UNITY" GOVERNMENT.

5. COMMENT: THIS CONVERSATION WITH ALVAREZ DEMONSTRATES THAT IN

PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS EVEN ANTI-DIALOG, HARDLINERS ARE BEGINNNING
TO SHOW FLEXIBILITY. SOLAUN UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, OPPOSITION PARTIES, POLITICAL SITUATION, POLITICAL CONCESSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE116230
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: ARA:LBLEVINE
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780194-0162
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780585/aaaacuxq.tel
Line Count: 118
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b5563aa3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2769238
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EMBASSY-OPPOSITION DIALOG SUMMARY: AMB AND EMBOFFS HAVE CONTINUED TO SUGGEST TO OPPOSITION LEADERS THAT INTRANSIGENCE WITH REGARD TO NEGOTIAT
TAGS: PINT, PINS, NU, US
To: CARACAS
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b5563aa3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014